

**Governor's Commission to Review and Advise on Services Related to  
At-Risk Youth in New Hampshire**

**March 6, 2015  
Room 206-208 Legislative Office Building  
Concord, New Hampshire**

**Commission Members in Attendance:** : Nicole Rodler, Mike Skibbie, Evelyn Clark, Mike Adamkowsky, David Dionne, Mary Steady, Geoffrey Souther, Karen Purse, Martha Kane, Betsy McKinney and Judge James Carroll

**Commission Members Absent:** Nicholas Toumpas (ex-officio)

**Others in Attendance:** Mary Ann Cooney, Corey Dearborn, Lorraine Bartlett, Penny Sampson, Eric Skillings, Amy Kennedy, and Sarah Emerson

**I. Call to Order**

Acting Chair Souther called to order the Commission at 10:05am welcoming the commission members, including a roll call with commission members serving as an introduction to each member

**II. Election of Chairperson**

Commission Member Mike Skibbie nominated Acting Chair Geoffrey Souther to serve as permanent chair to the Commission. Commission Member, Mike Adamkowski seconded the nomination and Acting Chair Geoffrey Souther was elected as permanent Commission Chairperson.

**III. Election of Secretary**

There were no nominations for a permanent Commission Secretary from the Commission members

**IV. Approval of minutes from last meeting**

There was a motion to approve minutes by Chairman Souther and Commission Member David Dionne seconded the motion. Minutes were accepted.

**V. Presentations**

**a. Michael Skibbie**

- i.** Commission Member Michael Skibbie gave an overview of the Juvenile Justice System. Commission Member Skibbie illustrated that the

significance about the child servicing system is that most children involved in the system are also involved in others systems and trying to coordinate those services. He provided an overview of the three principle systems, CHINS, Child Protection and Delinquency system, each having their own unique characteristics and qualities. Commission Member Evelyn Clark-Smith brought up the issues around certifying and requiring certification of an adult. Commission Member Martha Kane added to the discussion the participation of victims and the school districts to meet the academics needs of the individuals. Commission Member Skibbie clarified that there are many other youth systems that are outside the court systems, but within the systems in NH servicing the children. There is a very high rate of disability in court involved children, with multiple challenges. The handouts given to the Commission Members will be posted to the NH.Gov website

**b. Lorraine Bartlett, Director, DCYF**

- i. Commission Guest Lorraine Bartlett provided an overview of the Division of Children Youth and Family (DCYF) functions, structures and the roles and responsibilities of the child protection and juvenile justice program, illustrating that the main goal is to ensure the safety and support of children, youth and the families as a whole. Lorraine also provided an overview of the system of DCYF through a PowerPoint presentation to the committee. The media is usually under the understanding that parole and juvenile officers just work with the youth but in actuality they work with all those involved, parents, school districts, all those committed to support and serve that youth. Chairman Souther spoke to Lorraine regarding the issue around families getting children into services to which Lorraine explained that the main goal is safety, but also to work with the families as a whole and also keep the child in the home and the family as a whole unit. The presentation given to the Commission Members will be posted to the NH.Gov website

**c. Penny Sampson, Administrator, Sununu Center**

- i. Penny Sampson thanked the group for working with the children and the youth of NH. Penny provided an overview of her experience through the Sununu Center and the accomplishments and changes at the Center. She also gave an overview of what they do and handle and their goals. Penny invited and will schedule a tour with the Commission Members at Sununu Center and will ask each of the heads of the Departments within the Center to provide the Commission Members an overview of each of the areas within the Center. Penny handed out a detailed packet to the group regarding the facility. A video was shown to the group detailing the Sununu Youth center. The video is on the DHHS website and can be accessed. The center is fully engaged in the child from the beginning to supporting them throughout the process. One of the biggest changes is being part a performance based standards and being able to look

nationally at data; for example the injury rate significantly went down without conclusion and constraints and is a treatment based atmosphere now. Commission Member Martha Kane asked for some statistics around recidivism. The programs are typically 6 month - they illustrate that it is not a failure to come back. Penny works more on tracking positive accomplishments and development as opposed to recidivism. Commission Member David Dionne asked if the juvenile numbers have gone up or down. There is the capacity for 144 youth; the numbers now are low with 200 youth a year to go through the program. The daily population in the last 5 years could be 80 but is now about 50 or 60, with three detained today. Commission Member Michael Skibbie asked that there be data, reports, statistics and comparisons brought to the Commission each meeting. Commission Member Nicole Rodler asked that within a future Commission meeting a discussion around Stark House take place.

## **VI. New Business**

### **a. Next commission meeting date**

- i. Date for next Commission Meeting will be April 10, 2015 / 11:00am

### **b. Next commission meeting agenda**

- i. The agenda will be worked on at a later date before the April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **c. Next Commission meeting location**

- i. TBD

### **d. Other**

- i. Chairman Souther and Amy Kennedy conferred that there would be no need for the e-studio to be set up, as it would be a duplication of posting the items to the public. All items from the Commission will be posted to the NH.gov website shortly after each scheduled commission meeting.

## **VII. Adjournment**

There was a motion to adjourn at 12:55pm, seconded and moved.